

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes ☐
no ☐

Property Name: 5-25 N. Fremont Avenue Inventory Number: B-2705
Address: 5-25 N. Fremont Avenue Historic district: X yes ☐ no ☐
City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21201 County: Baltimore City
USGS Quadrangle(s): Baltimore West
Property Owner: Various Tax Account ID Number: N/A
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 0000 Tax Map Number: 4
Project: Red Line Project Agency: Maryland Transit Administration
Agency Prepared By: EAC/Archaeology, Inc.
Preparer's Name: Benjamin Roberts Date Prepared: 3/20/2012
Documentation is presented in: Enoch Pratt Library--Maryland Room, ProQuest Historical Newspapers Database, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Commission for Historical & Architectural Preservation (CHAP)
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: ☐ Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended
Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G
Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:
Name of the District/Property: _____
Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ Listed: ☐ yes ☐ no ☐
Site visit by MHT Staff ☐ yes ☒ no ☐ Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Architectural Description

Six buildings on N. Fremont Avenue are being evaluated as a district as part of this determination of eligibility. Some of these single buildings have addresses that span multiple street numbers, primarily due to their large size. The buildings at 5-13, 15-17, 19, 21, 23, and 25 N. Fremont Avenue consist of two commercial buildings and four rowhouses. Except for 5-13 N. Fremont Avenue, which is on a north-south axis, the other buildings are on an east-west orientation; all the buildings face west onto N. Fremont Avenue. The buildings display various forms, massing, and materials. All the buildings are vacant and 5-13 and 15-17 N. Fremont avenues are extensively altered.

The one-story building at 5-13 N. Fremont Avenue was constructed in circa 1920; it has no discernible architectural style. With an irregular plan, it is made of brick with a non-original stucco coating applied to the façade; this obscures the building's original architectural design intent. The roof is flat, clad with bituminous material, and has a shaped parapet at the façade; at the center of the parapet is a small arched alcove. A metal cornice with small brackets runs on the wall below the parapet. The asymmetrical façade has three bays. The north bay is blank, while the middle bay has two non-original single wood doors separated by a

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MHT Comments:

Jim Ambrose
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

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Reviewer, National Register Program

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plywood wall. Above the entrance are a lintel, glass blocks, and a backlit metal and plastic sign that advertises "Janae's Available for Parties." A secondary entrance in the south bay is comprised of a metal security door covering the door; there are vents above the entry. A fixed, single-light wood-sash window is adjacent to the south of the entrance. An original cast-iron coal chute door is also located in this south bay. The north and south elevations abut the adjacent buildings. The east (rear) elevation shows the building's brick common bond. There are four identical window openings, each with a segmental brick arch and brick sill below, that are either boarded up, blocked in, or contain air conditioner units. A concrete pad is located directly to the east of this elevation.

The one-story building at 15-17 N. Fremont Avenue was constructed in circa 1870; it also has no discernible architectural style. With an irregular plan, it is made of brick with a non-original stucco coating applied to the façade and east (rear) elevation; the north elevation shows the common bond brick construction. The roof is flat and clad with bituminous material; it has a tall shaped parapet at the façade. The asymmetrical façade has two bays. The south bay has two non-original single wood doors; there are no other features at this elevation. The north elevation faces onto W. Fairmount Avenue, and has an entrance filled-in with concrete block and covered with metal chain-link double gates. There are four, four-over-four, wood-sash, double-hung windows, with the exception of the western-most window which is filled-in. These windows have wire-mesh grills, jack arch lintels, and masonry sills. This elevation also has three small fixed wood-sash windows. The south elevation abuts the adjacent building, and the east (rear) elevation has no features. There are trees directly to the east of this elevation, along with ivy that is growing on the walls of the building.

The three-story rowhouse at 19 N. Fremont Avenue was constructed in circa 1890; it displays limited allusions to the Italianate style. With a near rectangular plan, the basement is partially raised at the east (rear) elevation due to the slope of the terrain. The building is made of brick with finer bricks of stretcher courses applied to the façade; there are stucco coatings at the south and east (rear) elevations. The roof is clad with bituminous material. The symmetrical façade has two bays. The first floor appears to be an older, although not original, storefront with an entablature in disrepair. The entire entrance feature is covered with plywood. Four tall windows are located on the floors above; those on the third floor are slightly shorter than those below. These windows have brick segmental arches and masonry lintels. All of the window units and shop door have been removed and are filled with either concrete blocks or plywood. The roofline at the façade is capped with a projecting metal cornice with a crown molding, scrolled brackets, dentils, and vents. The south elevation faces onto W. Fairmount Avenue; the west half of the stepped parapet has original molded metal coping. The elevation's entrance is approached by brick steps and low brick rails; the single door opening is filled-in with concrete blocks, and the door surround covered in vinyl. The transom above, along with the sixteen first through third-story window openings, including a small one, are filled-in with plywood. The two basement level windows are filled-in with concrete block. Most of the windows have segmental arches and brick sills; the same is true of the east (rear) elevation. Most of the north elevation abuts the adjacent building, but the exposed portion shows the brick construction. The east (rear) elevation has a single door opening to the first floor that is covered with plywood, with a filled-in transom space above. A single replacement wood door leads down to the basement level and has a segmental arch. The three windows on this elevation are missing their original sashes and are either filled-in or open; they still retain their original brick sills.

The two, three-story Federal style rowhouses at 21 and 23 N. Fremont avenues are nearly identical. They were constructed in circa 1860. Each with a near rectangular plan, they are made of brick with finer bricks of stretcher courses applied to the façades. The moderately pitched side gabled roofs are clad with bituminous material; each has a tall stucco clad brick chimney at the gable ends on the façade side of the gable slope, and a smaller brick chimney at the rear. The asymmetrical façades have two bays each. The primary entrance is located within the northern bay, and both are filled-in with plywood; the former door opening for 21 N. Fremont Avenue is accessed by brick and concrete steps, and the door at 23 N. Fremont Avenue has what appear to be marble steps. Both façades have a cast-iron coal chute door. There is a single window opening to the south of the entrance, and four windows total at the two floors above; all of these openings are filled-in with plywood. The windows all have jack arch lintels and

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masonry sills. The differences at the façades are that 21 N. Fremont Avenue to the south has a shorter first floor window and a metal curved awing shelters the first floor openings. The side elevations abut the adjacent buildings. At the east (rear) elevations, each building has a one-story brick wing sheltered by a shed roof clad with bituminous material. The residence at 21 N. Fremont Avenue has a prominent brick chimney and a window on the wing's east elevation that is clad with plywood.

The three-story Federal style rowhouse at 25 N. Fremont Avenue was constructed in circa 1860. With an irregular plan, it is made of brick with finer bricks of stretcher courses applied to the façade; stucco is applied to the north elevation. The moderately pitched side gabled roof is clad with bituminous material; a tall brick chimney projects from the north gable end on the façade side of the gable slope. The symmetrical façade has three bays. The primary entrance is located within the center bay, and consists of double doors that have been boarded up. The sidelights and light above the doors consist of fixed single-sash windows. A small green vinyl canopy covers the entrance with the words "Charles Carry Out" painted in white across the front edge. The windows at the second- and third-stories on the façade are replacement one-over-one vinyl sash windows. The bottom sections of the second-story windows are filled-in with vinyl siding. The second-story windows have jack arch lintels and small projecting brick sills, and are taller compared to the ones at the third-story. The third story windows have masonry sills. The remnants of a modern sign are located along the top of the façade and below the roofline. Most of the south elevation abuts the adjacent building. A one-over-one vinyl-clad double-hung sash window with metal security bars sits within the gable roof peak. The window has a masonry sill. The north elevation has no window or door openings, and the east (rear) elevation has one- and two-story shed roof wings sheltered by a shed roof clad with bituminous material. The two-story wing has a single vinyl-clad double-hung sash window with metal security bars.

These six buildings are located in Poppleton's urban setting in a largely vacant area with a few rowhouses and a commercial building from a similar. The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-listed Poppleton Fire Station (B-2707 and B-3693) and the NRHP-eligible Fayette Street Methodist Episcopal Church (B-2702) are located nearby. As indicated in Attachment A of the Memorandum of Agreement for The Poppleton Housing Initiative, signed in 2006, the Maryland Historical Trust determined that only the southern portion of the 1975 Poppleton Historic Study Area is eligible for listing in the NRHP. The surroundings have been more recently developed, including the University of Maryland Biopark buildings to the west, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and its associated landscaping to the east and south.

Historic Context

The evaluated buildings are part of West Baltimore's Poppleton residential neighborhood. Poppleton is today roughly bounded by W. Mulberry Street to the north, N. Fremont Avenue to the east, Carey Street to the west, and W. Lombard Street to the south. Poppleton was historically part of two Colonial-era estates, Welshes Adventure and Ridgely's Delight.

Baltimore had a mere 25 wooden houses in the mid-eighteenth century. However, a population increase of 43% between 1790 and 1800 resulted in expanded building efforts. By 1816, rapid growth in and around Baltimore led the city to annex a large part of the surrounding territory, including the Poppleton area. This was the city's first step toward alleviating problems resulting from inconsistent growth, poorly designed streets, and inadequate drainage systems. The city appointed engineer-surveyor Thomas H. Poppleton, the area's namesake, to survey the newly annexed areas, lay out new streets, and combine the existing city components. Poppleton's Plan of the City of Baltimore from 1823 described the current extents of the city and outlined a pattern for future growth. At the time, streets west of Eutaw Street had been laid out, but building development was only just beginning. The evaluated parcels contained no buildings on Poppleton's map.

By the 1820s, the city and Poppleton's growth were further spurred by the Industrial Revolution which brought with it industry and workers, shifting the economy away from a city reliant solely on the port for commerce and transportation. Industry expansion at

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this time was possible because of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad; chartered in 1827, the line connected the ports to places far beyond Baltimore. The National Road from 1811 also played a significant role in this growth, as it connected Baltimore to states to the west. Areas like Poppleton quickly responded to housing demands. Rows of small houses were built for the working class, with larger architect-designed homes constructed for newly wealthy industrialists. By 1851, 2,000 new houses were being constructed annually, as compared to 400 residences twenty years before. The Plan of the City of Baltimore Maryland by Sidney & Neff, also from 1851, shows there to be development on the evaluated parcels, although it is highly likely that none of these are the same buildings as on the parcels today.

From the beginning, people of different economic classes lived in Poppleton. One area with upper-income households was located to the southwest of the evaluated buildings, on Lombard and Hollins streets, between Fremont Avenue and Poppleton Street. The existence of industry, much of it located south of W. Baltimore Street, and the need for servants in nearby wealthier households encouraged the presence of the working class in Poppleton. Household help generally lived in smaller two-bay, two-story houses, oftentimes on narrow, mid-block streets like W. Fairmount Avenue (historically Raborg Street) occupied by working class whites and African-Americans. The evaluated buildings were located in an area that was originally primarily working class with clusters of small frame houses. By the 1840s, however, these were replaced by brick buildings. Before the turn of the eighteenth century, about half of Baltimore's buildings were wood frame construction clad with horizontal wood boards. A city ordinance was passed in 1799 that forbade the construction of wood buildings, except for fire engine houses, brought on by fire devastations in London and Philadelphia. The 1869 E. Sachse & Co. bird's eye view of the City of Baltimore shows most of this area to be densely built-up, primarily with residential and mixed-use rowhouses with flat and side gabled roofs. Institutional buildings like churches and schools also dotted the neighborhood. This segment of N. Fremont Avenue had mainly residential rowhouses, although there were also some mixed-use rowhouses with storefronts on the first floor. The evaluated rowhouses would have likely originally housed middle-class households.

The two- to three story and two- to three-bay Federal style rowhouse, with shallow gables and dormers on a moderately-pitched side gabled-roof, was a popular form in pre-Civil War Baltimore. Simpler variations could have a lower-pitched gabled-roof and no dormer. There was often a prominent brick chimney on a gable end, and shutters flanking the windows. The buildings at 21, 23, and 25 N. Fremont avenues are examples of Federal style residences.

The Italianate style began in 1850, but became popular in neighborhoods like Poppleton after the Civil War. Influenced by the country villas in northern Italy, the style had originated in England as part of the Picturesque Movement that reacted to the formal classical influences in architecture up until that time. After 1850, many Baltimore rowhouses were either designed or remodeled to include Italianate stylistic features. The flat-roof design had become the preferred standard over the gable roof, typical of the Federal style. The buildings were taller than buildings from prior eras and windows were lengthened and widened, becoming shorter on each successive floor and emphasizing the façade's verticality. Large and generally elaborate cornices, typically supported on consoles and incorporating dentil molding, crowned the buildings. Elaborate ornamentation such as brackets was also associated with Italianate doorways and windows, and cast-iron was also incorporated in railings, balustrades, and widow boxes. Despite the elaborate nature of the new style, the Baltimore rowhouse retained its modest two-dimensional appearance; ornament continued to be applied to, rather than fully incorporated with, the façade. Italianate features are minimally included, but working-class rowhouses did not robustly display the style. The building at 19 N. Fremont Avenue is an example of an Italianate-influenced rowhouse.

Even in as early as the 1890s, the dynamics of Poppleton began to change, with new suburbs attracting city residents, which lead to decreased populations. In addition, areas such as the N. Fremont Avenue corridor were becoming increasingly commercial. In circa 1920, 5-13 N. Fremont Avenue was constructed, demolishing residential rowhouses. In the 1930s, a section near the northeast corner of Poppleton was demolished for "slum clearance," and The Edgar Allen Poe Homes, a garden-style public

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housing project, was constructed in 1940 in the place of the former rowhomes. During the post-World War II years, the Poppleton area experienced a large loss of population. The 1951 Sanborn Company fire insurance map shows two of the four evaluated residential buildings were converted into shops; the buildings with the storefronts today reflect this new use. In addition, beginning in the 1960s, the construction of Route 40 along W. Mulberry Street and N. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard caused the demolition of hundreds of homes, destroyed the historic neighborhood cohesion, and interrupted the flow of traffic through the area.

Currently the Poppleton area surrounding the evaluated buildings is being redeveloped. A large number of buildings, both residential and commercial, are being demolished to make way for a new planned neighborhood development headed by the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Housing Authority. The project broke ground in 2010 to begin the first phase of the project. The area directly to the west of the evaluated buildings was recently developed as the University of Maryland Biopark. Meanwhile, all of the evaluated buildings are currently vacant and generally boarded up. The two one-story commercial buildings have been extensively remodeled with a stucco cladding and filled-in openings at the façade. The building at 5-13 N. Fremont Avenue, however, still has its original cast-iron coal chute at the façade. The rowhouses retain most of their original ground plan and form, although early additions were made to the rear of 19 and 25 N. Fremont Avenue. The building at 19 N. Fremont Avenue retains its original Italianate cornice, and their original fenestration and brickwork on the primary elevations' upper floors are extant. The lower floors are intact for 21 and 23 N. Fremont Avenue, although their flanking rowhouses have non-original storefronts. The three Federal style residences retain their prominent Federal style chimneys; the two identical rowhouses have their original cast-iron coal chutes. The window sashes on the upper floors of all the rowhouses have been replaced or boarded up. However, overall, the district does not retain integrity; the changes collectively contribute to overall disparity among the buildings.

Significance Evaluation

The properties at 5-13, 15-17, 19, 21, 23, and 25 N. Fremont Avenue were evaluated for inclusion in the NRHP Criteria A, B, and C, using the guidelines set forth in the National Register Bulletin, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation." The grouping was evaluated as a small district.

The evaluated district is part of the historic development of the Poppleton area. However, together the buildings do not share a common or significant historic trend. The residential rowhouses and the circa 1870 commercial building were part of Baltimore City's extensive growth into the Poppleton area, particularly due to the Industrial Revolution in the 1820s in major cosmopolitan areas in the United States. Early expansions went west into Poppleton where households of varying economic classes came to live and work. The properties at 5-13 and 15-17 N. Fremont Avenue were part of this context, but they are not historically important and do not convey the establishment of Poppleton. The circa 1920 commercial building played a role in Poppleton's decline during the twentieth century as the area became more commercial and individual homes being turned into boarding houses. Two of the rowhouses were converted into shops during the twentieth century. However, these properties do not have significance within this context. The evaluated parcels do not have an important association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, and therefore this district is not eligible under Criterion A.

Research has not shown that this district is associated with the lives of persons significant in the past. Therefore, it is not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B.

The evaluated district contains very modest and altered examples of Federal and Italianate Revival style rowhouses, as well as nineteenth and early twentieth century one-story commercial buildings. At the times that they were constructed, these were the designs of choice. To be eligible, the buildings would need to embody character-defining features that would make them good

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended _____ Eligibility not recommended _____

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Date

Reviewer, National Register Program

Date

examples of their style and/or type. This is not the case for these properties. They are not the work of a master and exhibit common materials and forms which have been altered over time; windows and doors have been replaced and new wall cladding added. Collectively, these alterations obscure the buildings' historic appearance and their integrity of design and materials. Because these buildings do not convey any distinctive characteristics or artistic values and have been altered, they are not representative examples of their style and/or type. In addition, the buildings together do not constitute a historic district, and therefore are not eligible under Criterion C.

The properties at 5-13, 15-17, 19, 21, 23, and 25 N. Fremont avenues were not evaluated under Criterion D as part of this assessment.

Based on the evaluated criteria, the buildings at 5-13, 15-17, 19, 21, 23, and 25 N. Fremont avenues are not eligible for listing in the NRHP.

Works Consulted

"5-25 N. Fremont Avenue (B-2705)." Poppleton Historic Study. Maryland Historical Trust, 1981.

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Reddy, Sumathi. "Rebirth, with some regret; Neighbors are split on plans for Poppleton, which call for razing homes to spark development." The Baltimore Sun. 4 November 2005, p. 1B.

Ryon, Roderick N. "West Baltimore Neighborhoods: Sketches of Their History 1840-1960." Baltimore: The Institute for Publications Design at the University of Baltimore, c1999.

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The Sanborn Company fire insurance maps, 1879, 1890, 1901, 1914, and 1951.

Sidney & Neff. Plan of the City of Baltimore Maryland, June 1851.

Stanton, Phoebe B. Poppleton Study, volume 1, 1975.

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Wood's Baltimore City Directory, 1867-1868.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

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Criteria: ___A ___B ___C ___D Considerations: ___A ___B ___C ___D ___E ___F ___G

MHT Comments:

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Date_____
Reviewer, National Register Program_____
Date

**ATTACHMENT A
THE HISTORIC DISTRICT ADJACENT TO
THE POPPLETON HOUSING INITIATIVE PROJECT AREA
AS DEFINED IN THE 1975 POPPLETON HISTORIC SURVEY
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND**

The Maryland Historical Trust has determined that only the southern portion of the 1975 Poppleton Historic Study Area is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and is, therefore, listed in the Maryland Register of Historic Properties. The historic district has not yet been named in order to avoid any confusion with the current redevelopment efforts being undertaken in the northern portion of the Poppleton Historic Survey Area (which was determined ineligible for listing in the National Register/Maryland Register). Although the Poppleton Housing Initiative will not directly affect the historic district, it will introduce new visual and audible elements and it has the potential to spark new development that may extend within the boundaries of the historic district. Those boundaries are generally defined as follows:

Northern Boundary - West Baltimore Street

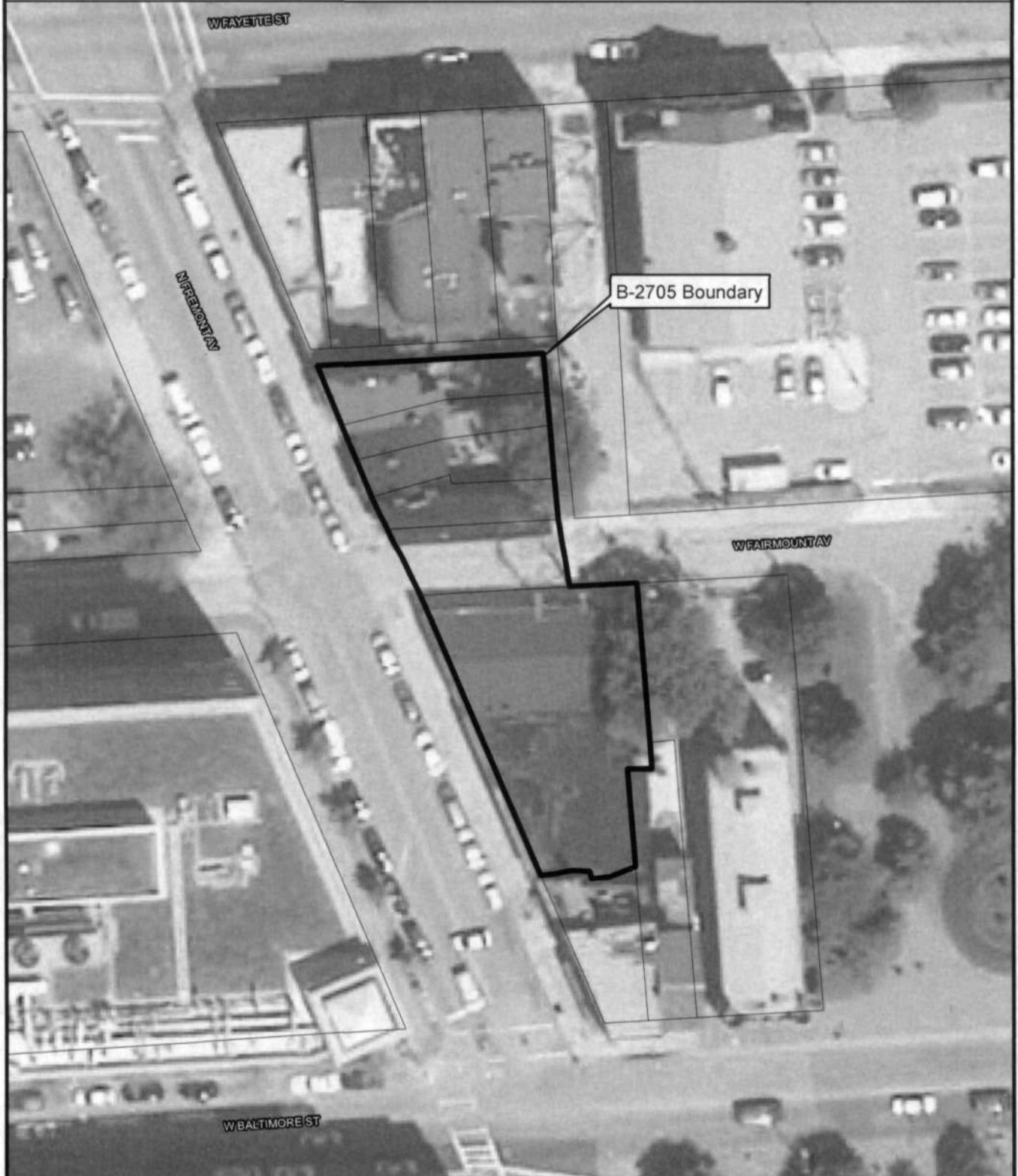
Southern Boundary - West Pratt Street

Western Boundary - the boundaries of the Union Square and Franklin Square National Register Historic Districts.

Eastern Boundary - Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and the boundaries of the Barre Circle National Register Historic District.

The National Register of Historic Places Nomination that will be prepared for the historic district should also include the few properties within the 900 Block of Lemmon Street that compose the small, local Railroad Historic District.

5-25 N. Fremont Avenue (B-2705)
5-25 N. Fremont Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland



Site Plan

0 25 50 100
Feet

May 2012

5-25 N. Fremont Avenue (B-2705)
5-25 N. Fremont Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland



Location Map

0 500 1,000 2,000
Feet

May 2012

Source: Baltimore West and East
USGS 7.5' DRGs

PHOTO LOG

B-2705, 5-25 N. Fremont Avenue

B-2705_2012-02-21_01

-West façade view, looking northeast at 5-9 N. Fremont Avenue.

B-2705_2012-02-21_02

-North elevation, partial west elevation, looking southeast at 9 N. Fremont

B-2705_2012-02-21_03

-West façade;

B-2705_2012-02-21_04

-North and east elevation

B-2705_2012-02-21_05

-South elevation detail

B-2705_2012-02-21_06

-West and south elevations

B-2705_2012-02-21_07

-South elevation detail

B-2705_2012-02-21_08

-West façade

B-2705_2012-02-21_09

-Coal chute on west façade

HP 100 Gray Photo ink on HP glossy premium plus photo paper. CD-R Gold.



B-2705

5-25 N. Fremont Avenue

Baltimore City, MD

B. Roberts

02/21/12

West facade view, looking northwest
at 5-9 N. Fremont Avenue

1/9



B-2705

6-25 N. Fremont Avenue

Baltimore City, MD

B. Roberts

02/21/12

North Elevation: Partial west elevation,

looking southwest at 9 N. Fremont Avenue

2/9



B - 2705

5-9 N. Fremont Avenue

Baltimore City, MD

B. Roberts

02/21/12

West facade

3/9



B-2705

5-9 N. Fremont Avenue

Baltimore City, MD

B. Roberts

02/21/12

North and East Elevation

4/9



B-2705

19 N. Fremont Avenue

Baltimore City, MD

B. Roberts

02/21/12

South Elevation Detail

5/9



B-2705

19-21 N. Fremont Avenue

Baltimore City, MD

B. Roberts

02/21/12

West and South Elevations

6/9



B-2705

21-25 Fremont Avenue

Baltimore City, MD

B. Roberts

02/21/12

West Facade

7/9



B-2705

19-25 Fremont Avenue

Baltimore City, MD

B. Roberts

02/24/12

West facade

8/9



B-2705

21-23 N. FREMONT AVENUE

BALTIMORE CITY (MD)

B. ROBERTS

02/21/12

COAL CHUTE ON WEST FACADE

9/9

POPPLETON HISTORIC STUDY

B-2705
MAG#042705504

<u>Block</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Address</u>
626	29/34-38	5-25 N. Fremont Avenue

Approximate age

<u>1800-1845</u>	<u>1845-1860</u>	<u>1865-1880</u>	<u>1880-1896</u>	<u>1896-on</u>
21-25		19		5-17

<u>Rating</u>	<u>Architectural</u>		<u>Condition</u>	
A	Significant-save	good	fair poor bad	
B	Quality-Indiv./groups-save	good	fair poor bad	
(C)	Important to street/groups	good	fair (poor) bad	
D	Insignificant/detrimental	good	fair poor bad	

Notable features:

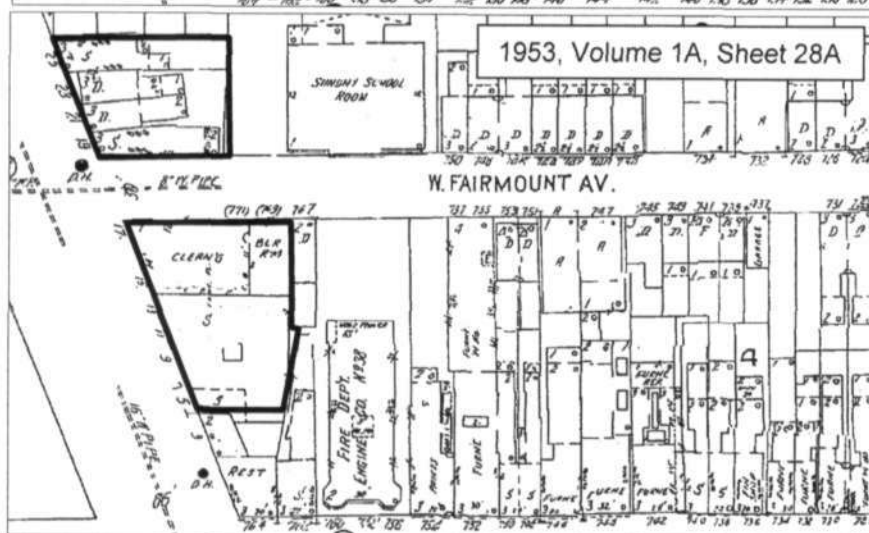
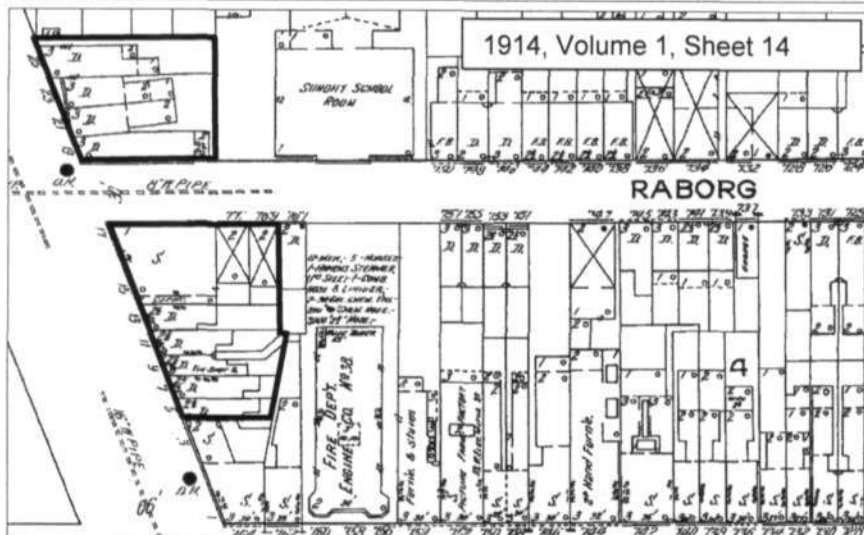
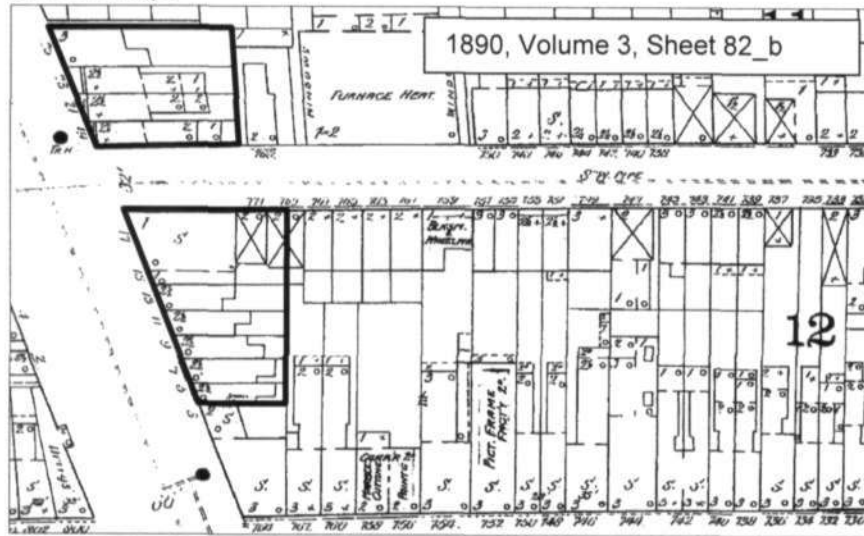
Numbers 5-17 are two modern commercial buildings which are unattractive in appearance and use. Numbers 19-25 are a really nice group. Numbers 21-25 are old; 19 is a tall, rather stilted building with a narrow front and long alley side. Number 25 has nice metalwork.

Environmental context:

Fremont is to become a 5-block, local street; the sidewalk could be widened and trees planted.



B-2705
5-25 N. Fremont Avenue
Sanborn Maps



B-2705
5-25 N. Fremont Avenue
Block 626 Lots 029/34-38
Baltimore City
Baltimore West Quad.

